



# Oregon

Tina Kotek, Governor

Department of Administrative Services

Chief Human Resources Office

155 Cottage Street NE

Salem, OR 97301

FAX: [REDACTED]

February 5, 2024

Danielle Johnson  
Procurement and Contract Specialist 3  
Department of Environmental Quality

Service by email: [REDACTED]

Dear Dani,

This letter is in response to your complaint submitted to Department of Administrative Services' Chief Human Resources Office. The complaint outlined concerns regarding retaliation and your removal from lead duties (and pay reduction) for protected activities and an email that constituted retaliation by Director Feldon. While closely related to the lead worker and pay reductions, your initial allegations detailed an independent aspect in your complaint that the reduction was a result of religious discrimination or retaliation for an EEOC filing. A thorough investigation was conducted into these concerns in accordance with state and agency policy.

The investigation is now complete and the complaint was found to have merit. Specifically, the allegation that the suspension of your lead duties and pay pending this investigation constituted technical retaliation for engaging in protected conduct during a July 11, 2023, online meeting, though no punitive motivations or individual management misconduct were present.

At this meeting, representatives of an outside consultant, Engage the Change (ETC), discussed an organizational assessment document prepared by ETC. Approximately 150 DEQ employees, including you, attended this online meeting. During this meeting, you raised a question in the comments about the legality of anti-racism work and the presenter invited a conversation with you on this subject. This exchange occurred in the presence of all online attendees.

The investigator determined that the decision makers' purpose in suspending your lead duties pending an investigation into the matter was to make sure staff under your leadership wouldn't suffer additional harm. That was a legitimate managerial purpose. With no evidence that the decision-makers had malicious or even retaliatory underlying motivation, this investigation finds that the decision makers engaged in no misconduct.

The investigation did not support substantiated findings that Director Feldon engaged in an act of retaliation with her July 17, 2023, email. The investigation also did not support substantiated findings that your suspension of lead duties constituted religious discrimination or retaliation for your EEOC filing.

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Finally, the investigation did not find that your conduct during the July 11, 2023, online meeting constituted a violation of the professional workplace policy.

While privacy considerations limit our ability to share confidential information with you about other employees, I can communicate the agency has taken appropriate action to compensate you retroactively for the period your lead duties were suspended. Your March 1, 2024, paycheck should reflect this payment and you will resume your lead worker duties from this point forward.

I would like to thank you for participating and I appreciate you bringing your concerns forward. You should feel free to bring such matters to our attention at any time, without fear of any adverse action being taken against you for doing so.

Should you experience any further problems, please feel to reach out to me directly.

Sincerely,

*Travis Hampton*

Travis Hampton, Investigation Consultant  
Chief Human Resources Office